

**Task Force on Professional Levels and Competencies [PLC Task Force]
March 20, 2009
Living History Farms Comfort Suites
Des Moines, IA**

Key Decisions

- Approved guiding principles for working together.
- Approved the PLC Task Force's work plan.
- Identified foundational decisions for the PLC Task Force's work based on previous work in constructing Iowa's early childhood professional development system.
- Identified tentative professional performance levels, and their labels, for early childhood teaching staff [teachers and assistant teachers/teacher aides].
- Determined the professional performance level represented by NAEYC's personnel preparation guidelines.
- Provided input to the PLC Task Force Work Group Chairs regarding Work Group membership.

Meeting Notes

Opening Remarks – Penny Milburn, Consultant, Iowa Department of Education and Barbara Merrill, Co-Chair, ECI Professional Development Steering Committee

Penny Milburn welcomed everyone, expressed her enthusiasm for the work ahead, and emphasized the importance of keeping in mind the ultimate goal of preparing young children to be successful in the present and in the future. She discussed the selection process for Task Force members and introduced the Work Group Chairs for each of the five NAEYC program standards for initial licensure that will guide the Task Force's work:

1. Child Development and Learning – Dawn Collins
2. Family and Community Relationships – Delora Hade
3. Observing, Documenting, and Assessing – Carla Peterson
4. Teaching and Learning – Mary Airy
5. Becoming a Professional – Mary Ann Adams

Penny then reviewed Task Force meeting dates [March 20, April 29, June 23-24, July 30-31, & August 27] and noted that some of these have changed to accommodate people's schedules.

In her opening remarks, Barb Merrill spoke of the ECI efforts to build a professional development system and noted that the PLC Task Force is one component of these larger efforts, which is why the ECI Steering Committee for Professional Development issued the Task Force Charge with the Iowa Department of Education. She discussed the ECI sub system ovals [Health, Mental Health and Nutrition; Special Needs/Early Intervention; Family Support, and Early Learning] and noted that the Task Force will be focusing on the two sub systems of Early Learning and Special Needs/Early Intervention for children birth through kindergarten.

Review of Charge – Penny Milburn, Consultant, Iowa Department of Education

Penny reviewed the Charge to the PLC Task Force, which was jointly issued by the Department of Education and the ECI Steering Committee for Professional Development. She stressed the outcomes that are specific to the Charge and the timeframe for their accomplishment: March through August, 2009.

Introductions – Penny Milburn, Consultant, Iowa Department of Education

Penny introduced her role as the convener of Task Force meetings. The Iowa Department of Education was assigned this responsibility by the ECI Steering Committee for Professional Development. Molly Luchtel was introduced as the Task Force's recorder, and Stacie Goffin was introduced as the PLC Task Force facilitator.

Members of the PLC Task Force introduced themselves and stated their affiliation. Task Force members were then asked to respond to the following questions: "As you think about the future that the State's children will inhabit in 15 to 20 years, what knowledge and skills do you think they will need to be successful? What new and emergent realities did you identify in answering this question?" Answers were discussed and collected for future reference by the group.

Review of Meeting Agenda – Stacie Goffin, PLC Task Force Facilitator

Stacie reviewed her role as a facilitator and provided a brief review of the meeting agenda, highlighting the meeting's planned results:

- Identify guiding principles for working together;
- Function as five work groups based on *NAEYC's Guidelines for Preparation of Early Childhood Professionals*;
- Approve the PLC Task Force's work plan;
- Identify professional performance levels, and their labels, for early childhood teaching staff; and
- Determine the professional performance level represented by NAEYC's personnel preparation guidelines.

Guiding Principles for Working Together

The PLC Task Force reviewed and approved the draft document outlining guiding principles for working together without changes. These principles will provide a shared and agreed upon framework for the group's deliberations and decision-making.

Review and Discussion of Background Documents

The Task Force reviewed background documents from previous work related to building an early childhood professional development system in Iowa. Decisions already made that relate to their work as a Task Force were identified as:

- Reliance on NAEYC's five professional preparation program standards;
- A focus on children from birth through kindergarten;

- Iowa Education Licensure Standards; and
- Iowa Teaching Endorsements.
 - Although the decision was made to accept the State's four teaching endorsements as a baseline assumption, members retained the option to recommend changes to these standards

Review & Approval of the Task Force's Draft Work Plan

The PLC Task Force reviewed and approved the draft document outlining the Task Force's work over its five meetings without change.

Performance Levels for the State's Early Childhood Teaching Staff

Members discussed the number and names of performance levels for teaching staff [teachers and assistant teachers/teaching aides]. The decision making criteria were: simplicity; translation across program types; manageability; clear distinctions between levels; observable differences between and among levels; and terms that are meaningful to users and stakeholders. An initial decision was reached and will be finalized at the Task Force's next meeting.

Guidance to the Work Group Chairs

Task Force members recommended names of those who might serve on the five work groups being convened to support the work of the Task Force. The work group chairs have been assigned responsibility for selecting their work group members based on six criteria: role diversity, including teaching staff; geographic representation; program type; cultural diversity; diverse points of view; and inclusion of individuals knowledgeable of program, early learning, and teaching standards (including CDA) with which the proposed competencies must be aligned.

These work groups, each associated with one of the five NAEYC program standards for personnel preparation, are scheduled to meet a minimum of three times, once between each of the next three PLC Task Force meetings.

Next Steps – Stacie Goffin, PLC Task Force Facilitator

Meeting notes and materials will be placed on a website for public review [the site address is forthcoming]. Work groups are to be convened before the next meeting and provided with the information needed to engage in this work with the Task Force. The next Task Force meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 29, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., at the same location.

Closing Remarks

Members shared general impressions of the meeting and the work ahead.

Adjournment

The PLC Task Force meeting adjourned at 3:22 p.m.